

via pacis

april/may



Around the House

Things have been especially busy at the house over the last couple of months. We decided to experiment with holding three of our five guest rooms for families only, and since we've had a full house the whole time, that has meant a lot of kids running around! We've really appreciated all the good energy from Birdie and Linda from Ligutti House, and from Diane Christianson, who has since moved on to Minnesota. They have all been helping out a lot with the kids, and it makes all the difference in the world!



Now that the warm weather is here, we are hoping to get moving on rehabbing the house we bought last fall which is located at 1310 7th St., across the alley from Lazarus and next to Corrie House. We bought it for a song, but that's because it needs so much work to be habitable.

We are anxious to get some of the major projects taken care of in a short period of time -- windows, wiring and plumbing -- so that someone can move into the house, since in this neighborhood if we put something in someone else will take it out if no one is there to keep an eye on things. So before starting serious work we need to have the resources lined up to get a good bit of the work done. Please help us out by helping to organize a special collection to purchase supplies or a group that could take on a project such as the plumbing or heating systems. Anyone who can help out please call us at 243-0765. We really need it!



Our plans for gardening have been scaled down considerably from last year and we have high hopes of finishing out what we start this time, unlike last year's disaster where the city mowed down the garden because it looked so much like an overgrown vacant lot. Just a reminder for anyone whose garden produces more than you can handle this summer -- we can give away any quantity of any type of produce in our free food store.



Since we've been so short-staffed lately we've really appreciated all the help from Mark at Corrie House, who has taken over the Food Store and restored it to a place someone would want to get their food from, and Tom Iverson, Linda Myrick, Filomena Bojorquez and Kathi Sircy and her baby Caitlin, who have been taking shifts regularly at the house. Patricia Dillener from Corrie House has been helping out every morning so that the food is getting cooked and the house is getting cleaned at one and the same time.



We've had a steady supply of good food to serve folks, thanks to several people who have been bringing food by on a regular basis. Thanks to Liz Goodwin for all the eggs she has been bringing in -- we never thought we'd see the day we'd have eggs left at the end of the week but these days we've even had enough to share with Rufus Jones House from time to time. Many thanks to a good friend for his weekly gift of chickens, potatoes and salad makings and to another friend and her children who bring by groceries and cleaning supplies every month. Thanks as always to Al and Mary Razor, for the eggs and bread from Huxley Bakery they bring every week. Two people we haven't mentioned before but who have helped the house immensely are Irene at K-Mart who saves for us damaged toiletry items and bags of Pampers (unsaleable but fine for our use) and who organized a special donation for the house at Christmas and Easter, and Barb at Wonder Bread who keeps the food store well stocked with day old bread and pastries. It's really great to be able to depend on regular donations like these! We also really want to thank all of you who stop by the house bringing food, cleaning supplies and Pampers. Since we don't buy food or supplies we are completely dependent on this support and really appreciate all this help from so many different people.



Quite a few different church groups have been coming over recently to help out at the house and see what it's all about. It's been a lot of fun for all and a good experience all around. Fr. Frank and members of his parish St. Ann's in Logan spent a day with us doing all the dirty jobs we were embarrassed to admit to. They really deserve a lot of credit for that effort and if they ever come back again they should get a medal! We've also had a lot of help from 8th graders in the confirmation class at Sacred Heart. They came over in small groups throughout Lent and helped cook, wash windows, scrub floors, write thank-yous and a lot of other jobs. We were really glad they came over since it was a big help to us and hopefully gave them something to think about too. Joan Engler organized three groups of families from the Christian Family Movement to bring over supper and spend a few hours at the house. We really appreciated the chance to spend some time with them too. And there are the groups which bring meals regularly: Central Presbyterian, Covenant Presbyterian, Faith Lutheran, Urbandale United Church of Christ, Sisters of Humility and Knights of Columbus. We love it when groups do this because it is a chance to deepen relationships and for folks to get a feel for what goes on here over a period of time.

Many thanks to all of you from all of us!



RETREAT WEEKEND

The weekend of February 26 we had the great privilege of hosting a Midwest retreat on Mark's gospel led by Liz McAlister of Jonah House. It was a wonderful chance to see old friends and meet new people as folks came in from Minneapolis, Omaha, Davenport, Iowa City and elsewhere. People we hadn't spent time with in too long -- John Shiel, Rusty Martin, Kari Fisher, Steve Gully -- others we had never met, including (an unexpected gift) Larry Cloud-Morgan who came down from Minnesota for the retreat. More people than seemed possible spent the weekend at the Worker and the CND house next door and had supper at the house with the rest of our guests on Saturday night. It was really a wonderful mix of folks.

It's impossible for me to describe the retreat itself except to say that Liz with her clear, strong and loving presentation of a Jesus I intuitively recognized but had never uncovered in a focussed way left me and I am sure most of the others who were able to attend the retreat with renewed hope and energy. And for those who were interested but could not attend, or who want to pursue with others a deeper investigation of Mark than was possible during the short time we had together, the good news is that Jonah House has offered to send someone to the Midwest for several months to work with interested people on a concentrated study of Mark's gospel. We hope this will happen later on this year, probably after folks locked up for their SAC witness get out in October. Anyone in Des Moines who thinks they might want to work on Mark please contact me and we'll try to work something out for this summer.



MARCH FOR THE HOMELESS

By Patti McKee

THE HOMELESS SPEAK OUT

At the end of February, I had the chance to attend the March for the Homeless in Atlanta, Georgia. The march was a major success; between 8,000-10,000 people came. The homeless unions from across the nation were represented plus homeless people from other cities.

The people from the homeless unions added a more assertive mood to the rally. All the Democratic presidential candidates except Dukakis spoke at the rally. People from the crowd gave them feedback about their proposed policies. Jackson was the only one to receive a positive response from the crowd.

We met at the Civic Center parking lot. Many speakers spoke there. People joined together for impromptu jam sessions. One formerly homeless person I met had written a song about his experience on the streets; it was a moving song. I wish I had the words to share with you. From the Civic Center, we marched to Woodruff Park in downtown Atlanta. Once I was out on the street marching, it was so impressive to see the street full of people as far as I could see in both directions.

Woodruff Park is one of the parks the City of Atlanta proposed to be a vagrant free zone -- no homeless people allowed. It is down the street from the posh Peachtree Mall and several business buildings. Well, Feb. 27 the homeless and advocates took over. More people spoke at the park, homeless people as well as Jesse Jackson.

The march itself was energizing. Our footsteps made the strongest statement -- not all the speeches -- the presence of the homeless taking a stand.

NEEDS

MONEY

(It always dries up in the summer but our bills don't)

PAMPERS

CLEANING SUPPLIES

FOOD

(Especially vegetables and fruit)

SUPPLIES AND VOLUNTEERS

(For rehabbing the new house; you name it, we need it)

COMMUNITY

KATIE BOBBITT
LUKE BOBBITT
WENDY BOBBITT
JIM HARRINGTON
PATTI MCKEE
NORMAN SEARAH
MARLA WELLS

Friday nights at 7:30 we have worship at the Catholic Worker House. Please join us!

Thanks to Linda Fritz for the drawings and photos at the SAC base. Those loving portraits of the guests are by Kari Fisher, and the photos of the Nevada Test Site are courtesy of CND.

Thanks once again to Dean, Sue and Doug for all your help with the newspaper.

thoughts on the swift 17

By Wendy Bobbitt

Early in March the INS raided Swift's packing plant looking for undocumented workers. Seventeen Hispanic workers were locked up. It's not too clear why the INS decided to raid Swift's while the amnesty law is still in effect, but what is clear is that this is just a preview of what will be happening when the amnesty deadline passes this fall.

This event hit home to us at the Catholic Worker because for a number of years we have offered shelter to Mexican families, some legal and some not, and we know the problems they face here and some of the problems they have left behind in Mexico.

Many people see the moral necessity of breaking the law by sheltering refugees of political violence and repression. Particularly in the case of Central American refugees, where their misery is clearly linked to our own greed and immoral policies, it is easy for us to justify breaking this law and to see the need to change immigration policies which prevent them from achieving legal status in the US. Yet the vast majority of illegal Hispanics in this country are fleeing not physical but economic violence in their native country Mexico. The amnesty provisions of the new immigration law, while offering security to some, will make it virtually impossible for most to find work here because of heavy fines to be levied on employers once the date for amnesty applications has passed.

For us at the Catholic Worker, who shelter people in need regardless of their situation, there is no question as to whether we will continue to take in refugees from Mexico. Yet the real issue, whether we as a people enjoying immense wealth and privilege, have the right to decide who is worthy to share what we enjoy at their expense, is what needs to be addressed.

Not long ago an article in the Register outlined a new system for determining who is eligible to immigrate to the US. A point system giving credit for level of education, ability to speak English, financial status and entrepreneurial skills is designed to ensure that future immigrants will be people who can contribute to our national wealth and help the economy.

We recognize the immorality of segregation within our own country, arbitrary lines and zones separating the haves from those who may not have. Yet national boundaries and restrictive immigration policies merely extend the concept of segregation on a larger scale, cutting off those in Mexico living in unbearable conditions of unemployment and poverty from any chance at a decent life. The immigration law, which supposedly is intended to protect American workers, will ensure that Mexicans already here will not be able to work and will have to return to their homeland or else will try to get by here in constant fear of deportation working jobs, if they can get them, that Americans will not take. Yet this law does not really protect American workers, since it does not challenge the present system by which American corporations are able to move across the border and operate factories in Mexico where they can pay wages no one could survive on here or there. The immigration law will certainly ensure a plentiful supply of cheap labor in Mexico for those corporations. It will also be a big boost to employers here willing to take a chance and look the other way while paying wages only the desperate would accept. And by not addressing the real injustice, which is that corporations are permitted to rake in the bucks by profiting off the existence of a line separating God's children from each other, it pits the victims against each other.

Immediately after the raid at Swift's one of our guests who was working at a local hotel using false papers was fired by her employer. After a couple of days spent trying to weigh the risk of being caught and locked up with no one to care for her children against her strong desire to see her children finish out the school year before giving up and going back to Mexico, she disappeared and we haven't seen her since.





WHAT'S HAPPENING

Jim is off to visit his friends in the North Woods of Minnesota. He just couldn't deal with the spring weather here yet, so he decided to go north for the last bit of winter. (ha,ha!) Actually he's smart and is heading south to Arizona from there. Jim has been faithfully taking the house practically every morning for the past few months, so I am glad he is getting a break.

Wendy has been involved organizing several events recently. She co-planned the retreat led by Liz McAlister at the end of February and made calls to get people to the march against the arrest of Hispanics at the Swift packing plant here in Des Moines. Currently she is calling people for endorsements for the rally to raise the minimum wage to be held on April 4th. She continues to take the house and come up with wonderful casseroles out of pre-fried frozen eggs. What a tough job. And of course she is Mom to Luke and Katie.

Luke is becoming more independent these days, playing with his bosom buddy Omar. It comes supper time and they are sometimes hard to find for they would rather play than eat.

NORMAN'S WHEREABOUTS

It's spring, it's April and in July, which is only a few months away, I'll be 38 years old. A friend of mine suggested that my birthday should be a good time to get a truck because by then I should have enough money to get a good one. So for those of you who are wondering when I'm going to get a truck, when I do I'll have someone take some pictures of it and put them in the newsletter.

So for now I'm still collecting bottles and cans. And washing dishes parttime at Panda Chinese Foods at the Locust Mall.

For a long while I haven't written anything about Checkers, Sheryl's and my cat. It's more hers than mine. I'm just raising it. You see, in Mitchellville the inmates or residents can't have pets and since Sheryl's children were taken away from her I thought a cat would be a good replacement for a while. Right now Sheryl's got a good chance of being transferred to a prison close to her children in Washington State. All she needs is the money to get there and the OK from Washington, so she'll know she's been accepted. A while ago I was trying to raise up some money for Sheryl's children to come to Iowa to visit her. She hasn't seen them for over three long years. She misses them a lot and it hurts because I haven't seen my mother and friends for almost three years and I want to go home when I get a truck. I didn't do so good, all I got was a pledge for a hundred from Bob Cook and a dollar from a couple of close friends of the house.

COMMUNITY NEWS

By Patti McKee

Katie has been a bit of a grump these days, but rightfully so. She has been fighting off a bout with flu, a cold and ear infection. In between times she has been her mischievous self keeping us all busy. She and Nora attend one of Jim's parties each morning. He spreads a fine feast for them, usually consisting of dry cereal and apple slices (Yummy.)

Norman continues his bottle collecting. He is also working part time at the Panda restaurant in addition to his work here at the house. I don't know how he keeps going sometimes. He is nearing his goal of being able to purchase a pickup.

For the month of April we have had Linda Fritz staying with us. Linda is a Brethren Volunteer working temporarily at Iowa Peace Network. On May 20 she will be going to Ireland for a two year assignment. Linda started pitching in the first day she was here and probably won't quit till we put her on the plane!

We have a couple new people who are helping out at the house. Kathi Sircy and her daughter Caitlin (9 months) have been helping out on Friday mornings. Kathi was part of the Davenport Catholic Worker several years ago. Since then she has married and worked as a nurse. She and her family recently moved to Des Moines and she decided to drop by the Worker and see what she could do. Little did she know we would take her up on the offer.

Greg Vitale, a friend of mine, has been taking an evening shift every week for the past month. By day Greg works for the Iowa State Commerce Commission as a consumer advocate in the Utility division. He has been around the Catholic Worker for the last year or so. He decided to finally take the dive and take a shift. Until this last week he has had a major incident happen on each of his shifts. I am sure glad he was not scared off on the first night.

A couple of weeks ago I went to Frank's trial. I was one of the many unlucky ones who stood outside the courtroom as Frank and the others were tried. Frank got about six months, I'm going to miss him a lot along with a lot of other people.

Lately I've been thinking about doing an act of protest at SAC, at the same time sharing faith with others. Doing just about the same thing that Jesus did outside or was it inside a temple? Jesus knocked over tables, set animals free from cages that might have been sacrificed for a profit. He scared peddlers out of the temple. This to me was what we today might call a plowshares action. To me, a lot of other things that Jesus did were forms of crossing the line, whenever for example doing things on the sabbath or nowadays the sabbath is Sunday. Mind you, I'm just thinking about it, because just as much as there are a lot of bad things about SAC there are also some good things too. I want to be fair with SAC as much as I am to people.

I'm hoping to get into doing something that I haven't been doing in a long while and that's taking trips down along the railroad tracks to help out anyone living there.

I also want to see America, the country I was born in. I want to drink fresh clean and cool water from springs before the water becomes polluted. I want to fish in ponds and lakes that haven't been filled in. I want to walk through forests that haven't been destroyed by acid rain or burned by fire. I want to go to parks that look like



It looks like the Bojorquez family is going to be around for a long time to come. They have applied to become US citizens -- so far everything is going well and they have been granted legal status. We are very happy for them.

The big excitement in my life is that I have been accepted into a 6 week study program in India this summer. The theme of the program is Alternatives to Violence: Cultural Interactions and Nonviolent Living. So in addition to my regular work around here I am planning for my trip. You will be hearing more about the program in the future.

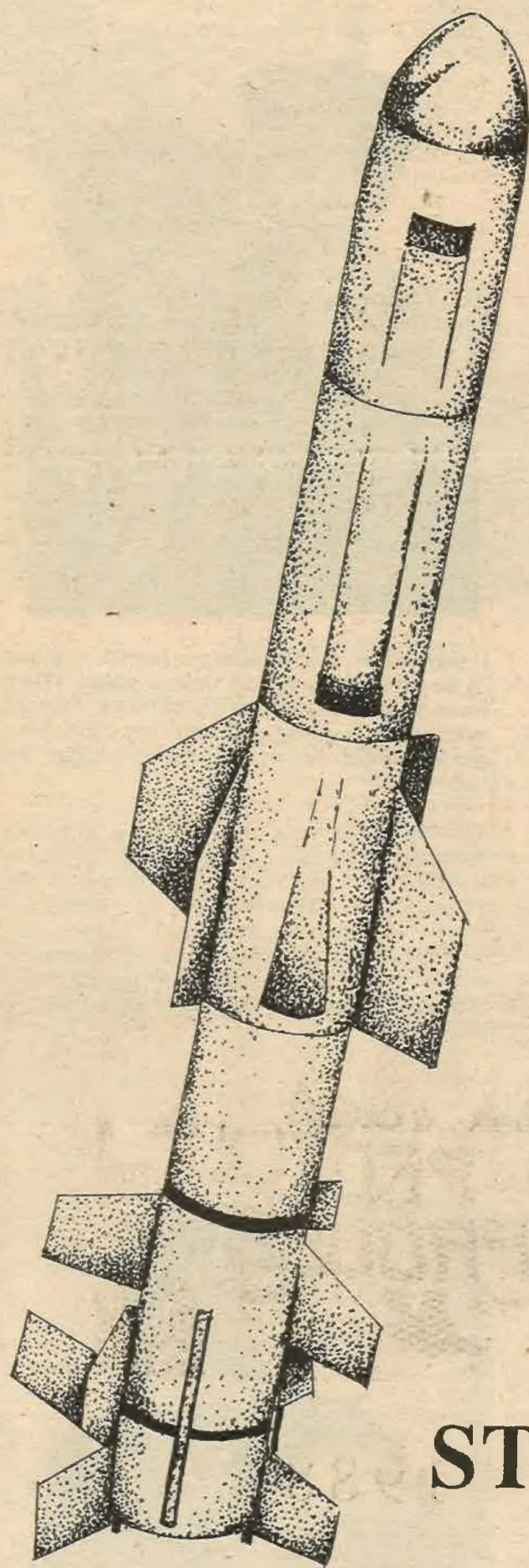


parks, not dumps. I want to see America where people care and there aren't too many around. I'd like to see the homeless fill up all the empty houses in this country which there seems to be, and have people come together and turn these houses into homes.

I would like to see hospitals treat people who can't pay for hospital bills, treat them as if they had money to pay. I would like to see doctors be doctors not business people.

I would like to see more and do more. Thank you.

SAC UPDATE



On December 28, 1987, the Feast of Holy Innocents, a group of 18 crossed the line at the SAC base as part of a continuing witness against US nuclear policy. Of those who crossed, seven were selected for prosecution for having crossed repeatedly and were set to go to trial on April 12. Those who were prosecuted were Frank Cordaro, Rich Koeppen of St. Anthony's shelter in Omaha, Marylyn Felion of Omaha, who works with Witness for Peace, Joyce Glenn, of the New Covenant Peace and Justice Center in Omaha, Bill Basinger of Des Moines, Kevin McGuire of Omaha and his brother Dan McGuire.

In an effort to elicit a clear stand by the Church in Omaha on the morality of nuclear weapons, two of the defendants, Marylyn Felion and Kevin McGuire, decided to seek sanctuary at the Cathedral on the day of the trial. Following the release of a press statement announcing their intention, the FBI came to their homes to arrest them. Marylyn Felion was arrested at her home, held overnight and had an early trial at which she was sentenced to one month in jail. Kevin, who was not home when the FBI arrived, went underground for several days and on the day after Easter went as planned to the Cathedral seeking sanctuary. At 5 PM police arrived at the church and Kevin left the building. However, as they did not arrest him, Kevin went home with family and friends and upon arrival at his home was arrested and taken into custody. At his trial the next day Kevin was sentenced to 6 months in jail and a \$500 fine.

On April 11, the night before the remaining defendants were to go to trial, there was an incredibly joyful mass and send-off celebration at Frank's church, St. Ann's in Logan, IA. The church was filled with flowers and so many people attended that there was barely room to stand inside. Frank had a chance to read his court statement, which most would be unable to hear the following day since the courtroom

is so small that only a few would be able to get in. Many people offered prayers for continuing strength for those who would be going to prison and, for those left on the outside, for strength to witness themselves. A special collection was taken up for St. Anthony's shelter in Omaha since Rich Koeppen, who has been their main fundraiser, would be going to prison the next day.

In court Frank, Joyce and Bill pleaded not guilty but stipulated to the facts. They were found guilty and sentenced as follows: Frank and Joyce - 6 months, Bill - 2 months suspended and one year probation. Rich was tried the following day by former Mag. Peck and also received a 6 month sentence. Dan McGuire did not appear for the trial.

At 1 PM on the afternoon of the trial seven more people went to the SAC base to continue the witness by crossing the line. Those who crossed were Wendy Bobbitt, Bob Cook, Bob Lang, Dennis McLaughlin, Mark Rogness, Renate Schroedel, and Mike Sprong. Before crossing the line Bob Cook read the group's statement in which they declared solidarity with those who had just been sentenced and reaffirmed that witnesses at SAC will and must continue regardless of legal penalties.

At this writing Marylyn is finishing up her month's visit at Sarpy and Douglas County jails. The others are in transit but their destinations appear to be: Frank: Marion (camp), Joyce: Lexington, Rich: Duluth. Kevin McGuire has just ended a 20 day water fast begun when he was locked up and is planning further non-cooperation with the prison system. Rich Koeppen wrote and says he is being denied his prescription medicine. To advocate on his behalf call the Regional Office of the Federal Bureau of Prisons at (816)891-7007.

For up-to-date addresses, please contact the house at 243-0765.

STATEMENT AT SENTENCING

Last month U.S. Attorney Thomas Thalken was quoted in the World Herald as saying, "As soon as we receive the referrals from Offutt, we will afford Father Cordaro the justice he seeks." If what is happening here today in this court room is the justice Mr. Thalken has in mind then we clearly have two entirely different understandings of justice.

The Prosecution would have us believe we are here because we violated past "Ban & Bar" letters from SAC Airforce Base in Bellevue, Nebraska. It's a simple matter of 'fact' -- facts that I have stipulated to. Oh ... but what a narrow myopic point of view. I have been coming to this court for over eight years -- seeing good people; people of all ages and walks of life pleading their case for the human race -- for the soul of this community and the best this court can do is protect white lines at SAC.

There has been an accumulation of ten years of jail time served by these good people of conscience. And each time the court would have us believe they are upholding the law defending white lines. Your predecessor, Judge Peck, once called our witnessing at SAC a charade in which both the protesters and the SAC authorities follow a pat script for public relations purposes. How cynical. The real charades take place here in this court room. Those ten years of jail time were not served for crossing white lines. Those ten years were served to silence the few who see through the lie that props up this community. A lie that threatens the life of the planet.

SAC's profession is not Peace but Global Nuclear Terrorism. Its roots go back to the end of World War II when massive indiscriminate bombings of major population centers in Germany and Japan brought the war to an end. The Atomic devices used to destroy the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were simply the technological extensions of an immoral policy of massive population bombings.

When the guns of war were silenced, Japan and Germany brought to their knees; the Allies shied no remorse or repentance for the 'spirit' of madness that brought Nuclear weapons into the world. These war crimes went unchallenged. The winners blessed themselves, as winners often do. They justified their actions by condemning their condemnable enemies. Soon after the war, this obscene form of war making was made the cornerstone of our National Defense.

Today, forty-three years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Atomic devices that were the technological step-child of an immoral way of making war are out of control. The tens of thousands of nuclear weapons in their many varieties, shapes and capabilities seem to have a life of their own; reproducing at an ever increasing pace; newer and better generations of massive tools of destruction. We find ourselves in an arms race with no end in sight. We have pushed these nuclear weapons onto the land, into the sea and up in the air. We are now threatening to break the space barrier with these weapons from hell. And through it all our national leaders and political system proceed as if they are in control. Nothing can be further from the truth.

CROSSING THE LINE



By Wendy Bobbitt

Some of us who were planning to attend the trial of the people being prosecuted for their witness at SAC decided to follow up the trial by going across the line ourselves, as a statement that witnessing at SAC will continue despite court actions being taken against those who cross. I had never crossed the line before, partly because since it just involves a ban and bar letter and I didn't know anyone who had ever been locked up for it, it seemed like little more than a gesture, and partly because it has always seemed kind of contrived to me. Recently, though, as I have been thinking about it, the assumption that our bases are some kind of sacred ground where we cannot walk has been bothering me more and more, so I had already decided to cross when this opportunity came up.

Since I was still feeling pretty la-di-da about the whole thing I was totally unprepared for what I saw when we drove up to the SAC base. You come through a neighborhood up to the base, which is surrounded by a chain-link fence. It looks for all the world like you are coming to the state fairgrounds. But several blocks away you suddenly see these huge missiles standing upright just inside the fence. There, concrete and inescapable, is the image of our peaceful day-to-day life overshadowed by weapons of death.

Crossing the line itself was really strange. It really felt artificial because it is artificial. On the other side is the SAC museum, so there is certainly no sense to the line as a division between the people and the military or anything like that. We couldn't find the people we were supposed to be with so we crossed the line in the car turning around to go look for them. There weren't any guards there; the line isn't even close to the chain-link fence. All the line is, is a painted line in the street that divides the base from those who are challenging what goes on there, and evidently it only exists for occasions when a protest is scheduled.

Once we all got ourselves together we stepped out into the street at the line, but the guards (who were now on the scene) suggested that we cross on the grass instead so we wouldn't get hit by a car, and we did, and they put us on a bus and carried us to the security office, fingerprinted us, gave us our piece of paper, put us back on the bus, and that was that.

The interesting thing about crossing is that the whole format disguises what is really happening. The people at the base are very cordial; they and you can easily forget what this is really about. The guards could almost be guiding you to a tour bus, and the people who process you are just doing more of the paperwork they do every day. As for us, sitting around chatting in our chairs outside the office we seemed very far away from the court scene we had left that morning where people had been sentenced to six months for crossing the line.

The reality of those six-month sentences makes you think about what is really going on here. No damage is done, nothing is disrupted, there is certainly no criminal activity that society needs to be protected from by locking people up. Nothing even happens that does not happen every day when civilians cross the line to admire our relics of violence at the SAC museum on the other side. And everyone at the SAC base knows, and shows through their low-key treatment of protesters, that there is no physical threat to base security here.

There is no way to explain the severity of these sentences except to acknowledge that they are a punishment of dissent. They even have a built-in means of identifying those who are really serious about it, since you have to cross a few times to get prosecuted and if you are willing to respect the authority of the court to define your actions you can get probation for the first few times. The beauty of getting locked up for crossing at SAC is that no one can explain it away by saying that a person deserves it because they damaged property, or disrupted activities at the base, or anything like that. No one can divert the issue, because nothing that could be considered a crime has occurred. So every time a SAC protester crosses as a repeater, the prosecutor and the judge have to deal with their own participation in protecting our nuclear policy. And all of us who are close to the person who gets locked up have to deal with it too, and see where it leads us.



CING

Omaha, April 12, 1988

In the early 1950's the Strategic Air Command came to Omaha and found a receptive community. Four decades and hundreds of millions of dollars later the 'spirit' of the Bomb has all but bought the soul of this community. It's late in the process -- darkness rules the time except for a few who dare to expose the lie, who dare to cross white lines.

Yes, I seek justice, a much different justice than Mr. Thalken has to offer. I look for the time when the faith communities of Omaha will embrace people of conscience, who risk their personal freedom to expose the lie. When every Church sanctuary will be a safe haven for peace makers and truth speakers. I look for the day when the Federal District Attorney's Office and this court will cease dragging people like us before them and instead, drag the responsible parties at SAC into this court for violating international law that prohibits the use or intended use of genocidal weapons, the very weapons that are today under SAC's command. I look to the day when people en masse will encamp on that base and bring the work of SAC to a halt. This is the justice I seek; the day when war makers are the outlaws and jail sentences for line crossers are ancient history.

Until such justice comes to pass I pray to God that people of faith will continue to confront the Nuclear heresy -- a madness of spirit that holds this community dumbstruck. That good people will continue to cross those white lines regardless of the personal consequences.

Finally, I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not repentive or sorry for what I have done at SAC .. far from repenting, I look forward to the next time I can cross the line and I will urge others to do the same. If found guilty I will not accept any terms of probation -- to do so would be an admittance of guilt. A guilt I do not accept.

FR FRANK CARPANO



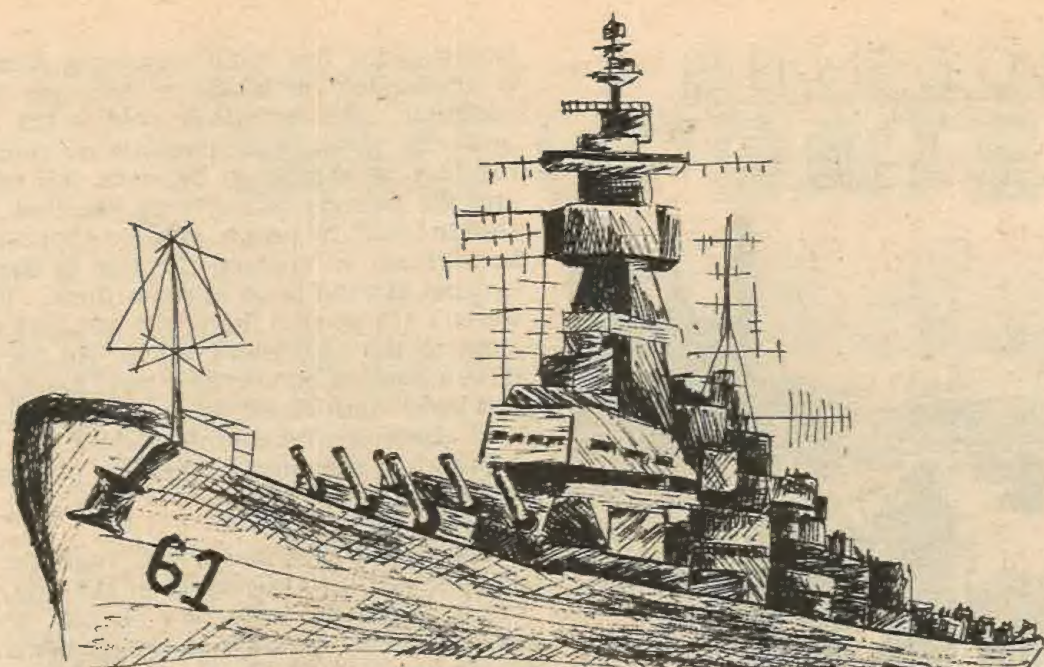
On April 3, 1988, Easter Sunday, four people went on board the battleship USS Iowa with a tour group at the Norfolk, VA Naval Base. They separated from the tour and climbed to an upper deck where some of the ship's Tomahawk Sea Launched Cruise Missiles are housed in armored box launchers. In a symbolic disarmament action, they pounded on the launchers with hammers, poured their blood on them and hung banners which read, "Tomahawks into Plowshares" and "Seek the Disarmed Christ". This Plowshares action was carried out by Philip Berrigan, Gregory Boertje, Andrew Lawrence and Sr. Margaret McKenna. The Iowa was chosen because it symbolizes "the proliferation of nuclear weapons at sea", "an aggressive Maritime Strategy" which could lead to global nuclear war and "the increasingly prominent role played by the Navy in our military interventions throughout the Third World". The Iowa recently returned from a tour in the Persian Gulf. In their statement, the Nuclear Navy Plowshares also issue an indictment of President Reagan and top U.S. officials for "their criminal interventionary war activities...and for their pursuit of nuclear war-fighting policies... in violation of Nuremberg Principles, other international Laws and the Law of God."

EXCERPT FROM LETTER BY ANDREW LAWRENCE



Of the many other questions I have had to grapple with in the process of preparing for this action, I would like mention two: First, isn't the willful destruction of property violent? And second, aren't other means of addressing these issues available? As to the first, people pose this question of violence in a variety of ways. Some suggest that the act of hammering itself is violent. To which I can only reply that in the course of our work here at Jonah House over the past couple of weeks we have set our hammers to many a task - knocking faulty cement from a brick wall, pounding nails out of planks, removing hardened paint from roller-pans, etc. None of which, by my reckoning, constitutes "violent" activity, but rather the application of an appropriate and necessary measure of force to achieve a worthy end. Pounding and kneading a would-be loaf of bread, plowing the ground, and using bolt-cutters to loose the chains of a shackled slave are comparable uses of non-violent physical force.

Some find this response utterly unsatisfactory, even disingenuous. It is one thing, they say, to knock cement off your own wall - do what you will with your own property - but you have no right to lay a hammer to my property without my permission. By extension, it is argued, one has no right to destroy government 'property' until and unless one is vested with the authority to do so. Failing to recognize this principle is to invite lawlessness and chaos. All of which, it seems to me, has a good deal of truth to it. One would be foolhardy indeed to write it off as so much fluff. And yet the legal and moral limits of this position should be equally obvious as well. I need only refer back to the example of the slave above. The holding of slaves today is illegal; I could hardly, then, claim protection under the law should someone set my human



At a preliminary hearing on April 4, the four Plowshares activists were charged with criminal trespass in the U.S. District court in Norfolk. Bond was set at \$2500 each on the condition they not enter any military installation in eastern VA and not travel out of eastern VA or the Philadelphia or Baltimore areas where they live. They chose not to post bond and were sent to local jails. Greg Boertje, who chose not to

appear on Nov. 17 in a Philadelphia court for sentencing in the Epiphany Plowshares action, faces additional charges.

Nuclear Navy Plowshares will go to trial May 19th. Letters can be sent to their support committee:

Nuclear Navy Plowshares
PO Box 9819
Hampton VA 23670

NUCLEAR
NAVY
PLOWSHARES



'property' free. Likewise, nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction are illegal under various international laws to which the US is a party. That our courts fail to enforce those laws does not mean that the latter do not exist, it only means that in this area our nation is guilty of the very 'lawlessness' it would accuse the Plowshares and other civil resisters of. Furthermore, (and here we deal with the issue on a far deeper and more truthful level) slaveholding was evil and indefensible even when it was thoroughly legal, and setting slaves free was in every respect laudable and necessary even when it did represent an assault on someone's legal claim to 'property'. Such claims desperately needed to be assaulted in order to expose their utter lack of grounding in truth. Comparable claims - no, claims which are even more base and indefensible - are bandied about today as though reasonable minds and open hearts might entertain them: among these is the notion that one group of people has every right to threaten the extinction of all life on the planet as a means of providing for the common defense. It is not hyperbole to call such thinking the work of madness. If the efficient and orderly institutionalization of this madness depends upon our regarding one's right to property as inviolate, then I violate this right with not only clear intent, but a clear conscience as well. Property is not sacred; life is.

The second question I thought I might begin to address was this: aren't there other means available for addressing these issues? The obvious answer being: of course there are. But why opt for them? Some people claim that Plowshares actions are somehow rather extreme. For my part, I am more struck by the 'extreme' violence of allowing 14 million children to die each year of hunger-related diseases while spending over \$300 million on the military. Others are put off by the idea that we have resorted to illegal methods of voicing our concern. But I have already pointed out our position above; that the weapons themselves are in fact illegal, not our efforts at disarming them. Still others recommend different approaches because they deem Plowshares 'ineffective'. Here I can only refer to my own case and grant credit where credit is due: it has been Plowshares activists who, more than anyone else, have stirred me to action on a variety of levels in response to the global injustice and violence I have long been dimly, but inconsequentially, aware of. I might add that I will accept some, but only some of the blame if our action fails to stir others to a deeper awareness and sense of responsibility vis-a-vis the arms race, interventionism, etc; perfectly good seeds do, at times, fall on hard ground indeed.

NEVADA TEST SITE WITNESS

By Ed Fallon

On Saturday, March 12, over 7,000 people gathered at the Nevada Test Site 65 miles north-west of Las Vegas to demonstrate their opposition to nuclear testing. In what turned out to be the largest-ever nonviolent civil disobedience action in this country, nearly 1400 concerned citizens were arrested for crossing the fence onto the test site, fourteen from Iowa. The protesters were handcuffed and herded into a \$3500 stockade constructed especially for the occasion. After all who crossed the fence were captured, 22 chartered buses arrived to haul them away.

By-passing the nearest and most likely site of arraignment in Nye County (Beatty, Nevada), the buses carried all 1400 protesters to the county seat in Tonopah, 170 miles from the test site. Once there, these dedicated people were un-manacled and let go. No formal charges were filed, and after all those hours of detainment, they were left to find their own way back to camp. Fortunately, the affinity-group strategy worked out previously ensured that a large mobile support team was in place, and the majority of those arrested were able to get rides back to camp that same night. (A few of us were even more fortunate and ended up in hotels or in people's homes!)

Saturday's action was the first of 10 days of protest, vigilance, and civil disobedience. This large and prolonged presence at the test site served not only to shut down operations for a short time, but to make more Americans aware of the dangers of nuclear testing. This awareness increases the general outrage against nuclear testing, serves to further educate people as to the need for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and helps mobilize a strong grassroots consensus to join in further actions and to work toward passing legislation ending nuclear testing. Accomplishment of a comprehensive test ban has been and continues to be a major priority of Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Even as this newsletter goes to print, thousands more American taxpayer dollars are being spent to arrest, detain and prosecute our fellow citizens whose consciences cannot abide the insane thought of the United States trying to get ahead in an unwinnable arms race. Think about it.

American citizens would absolutely not tolerate a nuclear power plant with that kind of record. This nation is made up of intelligent and caring individuals. It is the individual who will decide what is true security; and what is the result of greed and fear. Today, this small group of individuals from the Heartland of this country go to witness with their fellow citizens that we can correct mistakes we have made, before we go any further. The time to stop nuclear testing is NOW.



statement made at airport on departure for nevada

Today, a small group of Iowans are giving of their time, money, energy, and most importantly, their conscience, as we prepare to travel hundreds of miles to join with thousands of other like-minded Americans. We are not going on a vacation; we are going on a vigil. At night we will not sleep on soft beds in comfortable hotel rooms; we will instead take the rocky desert floor as our sleeping-place. The American "wonderland" we go to visit is not a beach, or a river, or a mountain retreat. It is an American-made ulcer on the land, and our citizens have been paying to have the U.S. government poison it in the name of national security!

It is ironic: world-opinion and our own sense of justice prevent the United States from detonating nuclear explosives in any other sovereign land on this planet. Yet on the average of every three weeks America triggers a nuclear explosion in its own backyard, in the thoughtless assumption that by increasing America's nuclear first-strike capability we make our citizens' lives safer.

We do not yet know entirely the destructive effects of our domestic nuclear testing program, in terms of ultimate environmental contamination and poisoning of America's population. We do know, however, that there has been more accidental discharge of radiation into our atmosphere from blowing up nuclear explosives in Nevada than the entire amount released from the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union. How secure does this make you feel?

Letter to Workers for Peace

By Jack Jenkins

We are looking for help. In an effort to curb the increased use of military weapons to resolve conflicts throughout the world, we are proposing that U.S. military appropriations bills be amended to require a shut-off of funds, or further weapons deliveries, whenever our weapons are used against civilians.

The reason this approach is important is that it seeks to develop a sense of international interconnectedness. When we acknowledge responsibility for the welfare of others in our global community, we create a world where use of nuclear weapons becomes unthinkable.

We are in search of people or groups who might be interested in helping to make this a national issue. We would like to build a grass roots constituency for protecting civilians everywhere. Any comments or ideas will be gratefully received. Please write us at 7177 Hickman Rd., Suite 10, Des Moines, IA 50322.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION OF NON-COMBATANTS

The United States government has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that weapons provided by the US are not used against non-combatants.

According to the Christian Science Monitor almost 2,000,000 civilians have been killed in the 22 armed conflicts throughout the world today. In fact, notes the Monitor, there are more armed conflicts today than at any other time in the history of humankind.

One important reason for the high number of civilian deaths is that international arms dealers and providers do not require that their clients exercise restraint in how the arms are used.

Yet the Geneva Convention makes it an international crime to harm non-combatants. The United States has signed, and is a supporter of, the Geneva Convention. Nevertheless, many US supplied arms have been used to kill non-combatants.

The United States provides military weapons to a variety of foreign governments and groups. Most of the time we do so because we believe their adversaries should be opposed. We support one group over another because we believe such actions are in the best interests of the United States. Since the organization we give arms to is acting collaterally in our interest, we bear collateral responsibility for how those arms are used. This is a legal concern, but there are moral considerations also.

Within the US the government has long held the position that it has the legal and moral right to require compliance to various laws and regulations whenever Federally supplied funds are used. It is consistent to require constraints on the use of weapons we supply.

From a strictly moral point of view, the US has long worked for human rights around the world. The right to life of non-combatants is an important human rights concern. When we insist that US supplied weapons not be used against non-combatants, we gain the right, and the obligation, to pressure other international arms suppliers to require similar responsibility of use. In this way the US can maintain its international moral leadership.

